

Message Text

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SUBJ: SOVIET OFFICIALS GIVE VIEWS TO VOA

USIA: FOR IBS/PS/BARRY, IEE

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET COMMENTATOR VALENTIN ZORIN AND SEVERAL LEADING OFFICIALS OFFERED VARYING VIEWS ON VOA, DETENTE AND OTHER MUTUAL MATTERS TO VOA RUSSIAN NEWS DIRECTOR VICTOR FRANZUSOFF, VISITING LENINGRAD/MOSCOW SEPT 11-25. (FRANZUSOFF WILL REPORT AND COMMENT IN DETAIL ON RETURN TO WASHINGTON IN OCTOBER.) END SUMMARY.

2. ZORIN, IN TWO-HOUR MEETING HE SAID IMPOSSIBLE TWO YEARS AGO, CONCEDED VOA HAS IMPROVED TONE IN THIS PERIOD BUT CLAIMED IT LAGS BEHIND GOVERNMENT IN ADJUSTING TO NEW CLIMATE OF RELATIONS. HE SAID VOA MAKES SOME MISTAKE AS GOEBBELS, ASSUMING 150 MILLION ANTI-REGIME RUSSIANS WHERE ONLY THREE DOZEN DISSIDENTS EXIST.

3. ON EMIGRATION, ZORIN COULD UNDERSTAND CONCERN IN A COUNTRY OF IMMIGRANTS BUT THIS SHOULD NOT LEAD TO INTERFERENCE WITH INTERNAL AFFAIRS A LA SEN. JACKSON. HE NODDED AGREEMENT TO FRANZUSOFF POINT THAT U.S. INTERESTED IN UNIVERSAL DECLARATION
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4. ZORIN CLAIMED THERE ARE MANY SOVIET HAWKS. AS "PRO-AMERICAN," ZORIN HAD BEEN TOLD HE TOOK TOO SOFT A LINE. STRONGLY NEGATIVE REPORTS ON U.S. IN SOVIET PRESS WRITTEN BY PEOPLE "STUPID AND HAWKISH"; BREZHNEV SAID IN 1973 SUMMIT IT WOULD TAKE LONG TIME TO REEDUCATE THE PEOPLE.

5. OTHER POINTS INCLUDED: TOO MUCH FREEDOM IN U.S. WHICH LEADS TO WATERGATE WHILE SOVIET UNION DOES NOT PERMIT DEMORALIZING ACTIVITIES; VOA SHOULD DEVOTE MORE TIME TO CHILEAN ATROCITIES; IF SOVIET PRESS IS NOT OBJECTIVE IT IS ONE THING BECAUSE IT REPORTS TO ITS OWN PEOPLE, WHILE VOA BROADCASTS ABROAD; ZORIN VOLUNTEERED HE HIMSELF WORKS INDEPENDENTLY AND NOW BROADCASTING COMMENTAIRIES TO U.S. IN ENGLISH. (COMMENT: MUCH OF ZORIN'S COMMENTS ARE SELF-SERVING, AND HE SPECIALIZES IN JUMPING ON BANDWAGONS WITH CONSPICUOUS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS.)

6. AT HIGH-LEVEL SPASO HOUSE RECEPTION FOR TOURISM DELEGATION, INTOURIST PROTOCOL CHIEF A.N. SIMCHENKO EAGER TO TALK ABOUT VOA, CRITICIZING "CHILDISH" CONTENTS OF ARTS PROGRAMS, INEXPRESSIVE ANNOUNCERS COMPARED TO RADIO MOSCOW'S "HONORED ACTORS" AND CALLING SWEDISH FOREIGN BROADCASTS BEST WHILE SAYING ENGLISH VOA MUCH MORE OBJECTIVE THAN RUSSIAN.

7. ADDITIONALLY, V.D. SAMORUKOV, MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION DEPUTY FOREIGN RELATIONS CHIEF, CRITICIZED VOA FOR BIASED TONE ALTHOUGH TURNED IT ON AFTER RETURNING FROM VACATION TO LEARN WHAT WAS HAPPENING; AEROFLOT CHAIRMAN N.V. BUROV SPOKE PROUDLY OF VOA INTERVIEW WHILE SERVING IN NEW YORK EIGHTEEN MONTHS; AND INTOURIST PRESIDENT V.K. BOYCHENKO, AFTER COLD GREETINGS, LATER BECAME EFFUSIVE AND SAID WOULD RECEIVE FRANZUSOFF ANY TIME.

8. COMMENT: RUNNING THROUGH DIVERSE REACTIONS TO VOA IS CLEAR SIGNAL THAT HIGH-LEVEL SOVIETS LISTEN REGULARLY, MOST TO RUSSIAN BUT SIGNIFICANT NUMBER TO ENGLISH. AT SAME TIME, ONLY RADIO MOSCOW TURNED DOWN A REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH FRANZUSOFF, WHICH WE READ AGAINST RECEPTION OF OTHER VOA OFFICIALS AS DESIRE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KEEP SOME DISTANCE FROM VOA RUSSIAN.
DUBS

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